

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE WILL FOCUS ON EDUCATION VS. INCARCERATION

INDIANAPOLIS—Increasing the enrollment of African-American males in higher education while decreasing the number incarcerated will be the focus of a national conference held in Indianapolis Oct. 26-28.

The Seventh African-American Male National Conference (AAMNC) will feature workshops and speeches examining the conference's theme, "Education vs. Incarceration."

State Rep. Vernon G. Smith (D-Gary, IN), also the chairman of the AAMNC as well as the Indiana Commission on the Social Status of Black Males (ICSSBM), said the success of last year's ICSSBM state conference led to this year's topic for the national conference.

"Our state conference in 2004 was titled, 'Don't Build a Jail for Me: Prevention Not Detention'," explained Dr. Smith. "We had such positive feedback from the conference that friends from around the country suggested we follow-up on this critical issue at the national conference. Our nation loses so many of its natural resources in the form of African-American males whose lives and talents waste away in prison. These men's energies could have been redirected toward education and personal progress if society only had reached them at an earlier age. That is our challenge and our destiny.

"We must help future generations of Black males refocus their lives toward building their families and communities," continued Dr. Smith. "Government and society must do their part in helping these young men overcome the tremendous challenges and problems they face in today's world. This conference promises to be fascinating and enlightening for anyone interested in education, prison issues and the social status of Black males."

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The conference will feature workshops and speeches by nationally renowned experts on education and personal development.

Among the speakers:

- Dr. Frederick "Freddie" Douglas Haynes, III, the senior pastor of Friendship-West Baptist Church in Dallas
- Dr. Juwanza Kunjufu, President of African-American Images and author of more than 20 books on issues concerning the Black community
- Dr. John Jackson, National Director of Education for the NAACP
- Dr. Julia Hare, PhD, National Executive Director of the San Francisco Black Think Tank
- Jeffrey L. Johnson, Vice President of the Hip Hop Summit Action Network. He also appears as "Cousin Jeff" on BET's *Rap City* and hosts *The Cousin Jeff Chronicles*.
- The Rev. Alphonso Bailey, an Indianapolis man who changed his life in prison through the discipline of boxing and religious faith.

Advance registration, until Oct. 20, is \$100 per person for one day and \$125 per person for the whole conference. After the deadline, registration goes up \$25 for both options. Lunches and dinner are included in the registration costs.

Student registration is \$25 per person until Oct. 20. After that date, the cost increases to \$35. Special rates are available for chaperones.

Separate tickets are available for the lunches and dinner. Lunches cost \$25 and dinner tickets are \$50. Dinner tables, seating eight, are available for \$350.

For more information, to register or to purchase lunch and dinner tickets, contact ICSSBM Deputy Director Steven Ingram at steven.ingram@fssa.in.gov or telephone him at 317-233-8849.

One also can register on-line at www.in.gov/fssa/icssbm/conference. Go to the right-hand side of the page and click registration. There is also additional information about the conference and its speakers on the site as well as information about a special hotel rate for conference attendees.

